

# Quarterly Message

## from the Mayor



Dear North Bend Residents,

August 27<sup>th</sup> marked the first day of school for many North Bend students. As is my tradition, I met up with local teachers and specialists to welcome elementary kids back for another exceptional year of learning. I saw many familiar faces, and I got a few high-fives from brand new students who were elated to

begin this big, new chapter in their young lives. Thank you to all families who have chosen North Bend as your home, and to our teachers and administrators, welcome back! You play a pivotal role in the lives of our youth.

Being a part of that “new school year” buzz alongside our local students is invigorating. Yet, with the enthusiasm comes increased traffic amidst a host of valley-wide transportation improvement projects that we must contend with – not to mention an increase in pedestrians out and about.



Part of the August 27<sup>th</sup> “welcome team” for North Bend Elementary kids.

With many years of experience in construction, I have a deep respect for the importance of robust, sustainable infrastructure. Our local roads, buildings, energy and water infrastructure must be built to last. It is imperative that the planning and designing of every project considers North Bend’s unique, mountain town economy, social and environmental needs – now and for the foreseeable future.



Please take care as you navigate through town and the Upper Valley. Crews are hard at work, and I am confident you will love the results. Enhanced wastewater treatment services, environmental conservation, improved road surfaces and accessible sidewalks are good for our community. But I understand the challenges of getting there.

Before you head out for your morning commute or gather your kids up for school, please join me for a quick look back at this summer, and a glimpse into the future with upcoming projects.

### Infrastructure and Transportation Improvements

In June, I had the honor of slicing through that ceremonial red ribbon as we celebrated the completion of the City’s largest ever capital project, the Wastewater Treatment Plant High Priority Improvements. Standing atop the headworks building, I was joined by former and current elected officials, stakeholders and importantly, the staff who helped make this project a reality.



The June 17<sup>th</sup> WWTP HPI ribbon cutting.



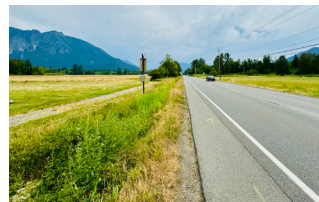
This critically important project raises our infrastructure to a whole new level of environmental standards by decreasing plant odor, improving safety, increasing the protection of the Snoqualmie River, and being prepared to accept

new capacity. This investment by our taxpayers is incredibly valuable. Landscaping is anticipated to begin along Bendigo Blvd/ Highway 202 following the installation and connection of the Meadowbrook Sewer ULID pipe by 2026.

Want to see your tax dollars at work? Let this be your official invite to tour the WWTP! To learn more, visit the [WWTP HPI Project webpage](#).

In addition, the City recently applied for a \$15 million federal grant to design and build a sanitary sewer collection, conveyance and lift station system in the Silver Creek neighborhood, which would bring us several miles of new sewer piping. Providing wastewater treatment in a community with a high water table ensures that sewage is treated to a high standard and that our drinking water is protected, consistent with the high environmental standards that the city is committed to provide. This would be a substantial improvement in infrastructure, and I am hopeful it will come to fruition.

In June, following a public hearing, the Council approved the adoption of the 2025 through 2030 Six-year Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). The TIP lays out a plan for improving and maintaining our multi-modal transportation infrastructure, prioritizing projects by need and availability of funds. Look forward to a wide array of significant projects, such as McClellan Alley improvements, Tanner Trail Phases 2 and 3, a roundabout at State Route (SR) 202 and more.



The stretch of roadway between North Bend and Snoqualmie, on SR 202.

With a healthy combo of neighborly collaboration between North Bend and Snoqualmie and a 2024 traffic study by the Washington State Department of Transportation, both the North Bend and Snoqualmie City Council approved reducing the speed limit on a portion of SR 202 from 50 MPH to 40 MPH. The Snoqualmie Tribe, the Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Meadowbrook Farm Preservation Association share in our concern for local wildlife and drivers. Traffic has increased over the years, and this segment of highway lies within the vicinity of our local elk herd. This needed safety improvement is now in effect.

Pedestrian connectivity is an ongoing project here in North Bend. In addition to removing sidewalk gaps throughout town, we are working to ensure that all our residents and visitors have equal access to public right-of-way. We are now gathering input to create an ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Transition Plan. In July we began a citywide survey, encouraging residents to report right-of-way barriers within our community. If you have not had a chance yet, please do share your feedback by taking the [survey](#).



You likely remember that in 2022, the Council authorized the formation of the Meadowbrook Sewer Utility Local Improvement District (ULID). Public sewer in the western portion of the City will provide property owners with development opportunities that better align with zoned uses in this area, promoting a robust commercial tax base and environmental support, with less reliance on aging septic systems. Since then, staff have been hard at work, staying on budget and on time. Design is now 60 percent complete, with construction anticipated to start in 2025.



## Public Safety

Your councilmembers and I are strong advocates for public safety, and we understand that emergency preparedness plays a big part in ensuring the wellbeing of residents, whether it is sunny with a chance of alpenglow or 14 degrees with freezing rain on the way. Working with Eastside Fire and Rescue (ESF-R), the Snoqualmie Police Department, King County Emergency Management, our local volunteer-run North Bend Amateur Radio Emergency Services (NBAT) and neighboring cities, we are in the process of strengthening our own emergency operations planning.

This summer, ESF-R wildfire mitigation specialists and staff met with community for a series of wildfire discussions and open houses. Feedback on debris collection events, concerns regarding at-risk properties and communicating valley-wide emergencies were among many topics discussed.



Mayor Miller addressed community at the June 24<sup>th</sup> substation ribbon cutting.

## Community Development Projects

Accessible parks, trails, and open spaces are an integral part of our healthy community, and in June, many of you joined us in celebrating the opening of Dahlgren family Park, a four-acre space dedicated to picnicking, volleyball, pickleball and playground adventures, with new trail connections and educational features that soon will share the Snoqualmie Tribe's deep history and connection to this land and to the Snoqualmie River. The park also creates new recreation opportunities on the east side of town, an area that has been identified as needing a city park. While the park is open, there are a few final items that need finishing, such as remaining pathway work, grass restoration and final completion of the pickleball court.



Community gathered to celebrate the June 28<sup>th</sup> ribbon cutting.

Thanks to a grant awarded by the Department of Ecology, staff are beginning work on an Integrated Public Shoreline Access Plan. We share in your love for local shorelines along the Middle and South Fork Snoqualmie River. As wildlife habitat, an erosion and pollutant filter, and a place of natural beauty, we want to



ensure you can view access points and trails to these special places, where we can recreate respectfully. Following a community-wide survey on shoreline access, we are hosting an Open House at City Hall on September 25, at 5:30 p.m. I hope to see you there.

This summer, we invited you to join us in envisioning a new future for 302 W North Bend Way, a highly visible property in our downtown corridor. Currently a vacant lot with potentially contaminated soil from its previous use as a gas station, we put out a call in July for your thoughts on how this gateway property

could be used to meet a variety of community needs. The survey received over 746 responses. Your concern and care are a testament to the importance of this place as a community resource. Please stay tuned for the survey results and visit the project webpage.

## New Businesses

As we continue our focus on economic development, we were pleased to welcome new businesses in town this summer, including The Village Project, Treasures in Heaven and The Book Nest. Also fun, I had the opportunity to join in on celebrating Wildflower Barrelhouse and the Hartwood Café with the SnoValley Chamber of Commerce and the North Bend Downtown Foundation!

## Budget

The Finance Department is working right now on the development of the City's next biennial budget, covering the period of January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2026. My proposed budget will be submitted for Council review in the coming months, with hopeful anticipation for adoption in December.

North Bend's long-term fiscal sustainability is important for providing essential city services to residents and businesses. To support this goal, council and staff have been working with a consultant to understand the city's near and long-term expenses and revenues and proactively implement policies to support the city's long-term fiscal health. An important element of the study's recommendation is to prioritize key economic development opportunities that will provide amenities for residents, create job opportunities, and generate city revenue.

## Community Engagement

Our two biggest summer festivals, Downtown Block Party and the Festival at Mt. Si, were back this summer and they were grand! July and August brought us a fireworks show, a parade, live music, local art and longstanding traditional community events.



I anticipate seeing both familiar and new faces at the September 14th Sip Suds and Si walk, our popular event downtown that shares art, wine and beer tasting and of course, local shopping.



Residents met up for Meet up with the Mayor on September 4<sup>th</sup>.

In September, I began a series of outreach opportunities called Meet up with the Mayor, where I invite residents to stop by a North Bend business and connect with me. If you could not make it, do not worry! There will be more.

As always, I am honored to serve this community. The next time you step outside, please join me in taking a deep breath, and breathing in that clean, mountain town air. Happy fall, North Bend!

Sincerely,

Mayor Mary



The property at 302 W North Bend Way.